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Some Lessons Learned,

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SOME LESSONS LEARNED.

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SOME LESSONS LEARNED

IN THE

FIRST CENTURY OF OUR NATIONAL EXISTENCE.*

BY LEWIS H. STEINER, FREDERICK, MD.¹

Among the festivals instituted by Moses, in accordance with the direct command of the Lord, was one involving the fiftieth year, which was to be signalized above all others by the proclamation of "liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." Then the land was to rest, and the citizens were to return to "the social order which God had first established in the state," and at the same time to be made to feel that all had alike a part in the covenant first made by Him with their forefathers. At the close of the solemn service of the day of atonement, when the high priest had completed the ceremonies—at the close of that great day of humiliation and fasting—the air throughout the land was made to vibrate with the jubilant sounds of trumpets, and the national soul that had been bewailing its sins and shortcomings in plaintive minor strains broke forth in exultant shouts and loud thanksgiv-

*An address delivered in Lancaster, Pa., June 29, 1875, before the Literary Societies of Franklin and Marshall College.

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ings. The year of jubilee was prophetic of that future jubilee, when the saints shall be forever freed from the degrading effects of sin, and thenceforth live in the freedom of the sons of God ; but the Jews hailed it with joy also on account of its immediate present benefits, in that it was the beginning of a new era in the national life, when the errors of the past having been corrected and atoned for, wrongs redressed, restoration of privileges to those from whom they had been wrested made, with spirits purified and strengthened, renewed courage and greater vigor, they might more perfectly perform the duties imposed upon them by the God of Abraham.

While no divine authority imposes the celebration of such a year of jubilee upon any other nation, yet mankind has always found benefit in carefully retrospecting its history at certain fixed intervals ; and deriving fresh courage and vigor from its successes honestly obtained in the past, has advanced to meet its future with greater courage and more confident hope. Such a period of national jubilee is now before this nation. It is about entering upon the hundredth year of its existence, and as the exultant sounds of the national centennial are ready to burst forth from all parts of the land, is it not fitting that our minds should be turned to a serious retrospect of the past and a diligent discussion of the prospects of the future ? There is much reason for jubilation, for devout thankfulness to Him who has brought us through trial and tribulation to our present condition, who has guided us safely through the Red Sea of war and blood and the perils of intestine disturbance. There is also much reason for earnest prayer that in the future our greatest glory should consist in the fear of God and in the love of righteousness.

Recognizing the propriety of such a national jubilee, I do not hesitate to ask the attention of this audience, composed of the active members of the Literary Societies of a College, full of the enthusiasm and ardor of youth, some of whom are now about to enter upon the active duties of life, and to *commence* a career of expected usefulness ; of learned graduates who have returned to the home of their Alma Mater with hearts full of love and gratitude, and who are ready to address kindly words of encouragement to their younger brethren ; of grave and dignified Professors whose toilsome lives are devoted to the preparation of young minds for

the serious problems they will hereafter meet in the world, of the representatives of the energy, enterprise and beauty of this thriving city, I do not hesitate in such a presence to ask attention to a few thoughts upon "*some lessons learned in the first century of our national existence.*"

The elements which were gathered together from all parts of the globe to people and possess the territory now owned by the United States, and which under the assimilating power of the national germ were made actual living portions of the national organism, were of all possible varieties. They were induced to leave their homes by motives as widely different as their customs and languages, and yet from such a heterogeneous multitude was evolved a homogeneous life, with striking peculiarities distinguishing it from that of all other nations on the globe. No nation can rightfully claim to be the parent of the United States. Its life springs from a new germ divinely planted here and appropriating for its development whatever of energy, enterprise and virtue is possessed by those who are either by choice or birth enumerated among its citizens. Just as the animal system separates, in the process of digestion, from the food those substances that can be made available in the upbuilding and preservation of the body, making them by means of the vital power a portion of its living organism, so does a genuine national life separate from the host of those who may come under its influence such elements as may make it a full, living realization of the peculiarities of the germinal idea from which it springs. A new nation always springs from a Divine necessity, and not from any mere resolution or compact of men. A Brigham Young may secure an aggregation of fanatical followers under the banner of a quasi-religion, may invent customs and ceremonies, habits and modes of life, construct monstrous architectural enormities for the accommodation or amusement of his people, but he cannot create a nation. At best he is only able to keep the dissimilar elements together for awhile, until the palpable absurdity becomes apparent, and the travesty is too contemptible for continuation, when the process of disintegration—not of death, which can only take place where there has been life—becomes speedy and certain. The chemist has learned the complex constituents of living organisms, but his knowledge does not fit him to undertake the construction of such an organism. However far he may push his

knowledge of the material, he finds that there is back of that yet something beyond the grasp of his re-agents and the revealing powers of his microscope, which endows what he has discovered with the high attributes of life. Efforts have been made not only by Plato and More to construct ideal governments and ideal peoples, as those of Atlantis and Utopia, but time and again bold enthusiasts have even attempted to realize similar dreams in the founding of new nations, and the result has always been the same. The undertaking has been a failure. An aggregation of man without an organic oneness of life pervading it will never form a nation, can never attain a more dignified status than that of a systematized mob, no matter how much care has been given to the elaboration of laws and regulations for its control and government. The experience of some of the colonies might be recounted in illustration of this. In some cases the colonists came here imbued, not with the spirit of religious toleration, but filled with a longing for a government that would embrace only those who could intone shibboleth in their favorite key and with their peculiar accent; in others they started with a written constitution which could only have had a home and significance where a country had grown accustomed to the restrictions and limitations of aristocratic institutions. But the intolerance as well as the aristocratic constitution proved to be foreign to the national germ which was to mould the characters and lives of men in accordance with the Republic, destined in the mysterious dispensation of Providence here to grow up and develop to wondrous maturity; and hence they were excised as morbid excrescences from the body politic.

Mulford* has well said: "The nation is an organic unity; it is not an artificial fabric nor an abstract system, but it has a life which is definite and disparate, and has a development; therefore, it has not its origin in the individual nor the collective will of man; but must proceed from a power which can determine the origin of organic being. The nation is an organic whole; but the whole, in which there is the conception of the parts, cannot be determined by the parts, since there must be the predetermination of the whole to which the parts belong; but the whole cannot determine itself, and must, therefore, proceed from a power beyond itself"

* The Nation, 55.

1. This lesson, then, that as the nation is an organic unit, deriving its origin *from God Himself, and necessarily destined to exhibit a life peculiar to itself*, I assert, has been taught us in the century now fast drawing to a close. Necessarily the lesson was not learned at once, but only after long struggles, fierce contentions with foreign powers, and bloody fraternal battles at home. At first preconceived notions clogged all the efforts of the early settlers. They looked with greater or less affection upon the governments they had left, and clung with more or less tenacity to the laws, usages and customs of their forefathers. The idea of separate and independent existence was only attained after severe trials in the school of adversity, when they found that at the hands of the parent government they could expect no sympathy so long as they remained in the condition of dependents. Slowly the thought of resistance dawned upon their minds, but as it became clearer and more distinct, their arms became nerved to its vigorous assertion. Resistance implied rebellion and revolution, and to this end it came at last. A few farmers at Concord and Lexington, on the nineteenth of April, 1775, struck the first blow and kindled a flame that spread throughout the land, throwing a bright light upon the situation and making the necessity of separation, although it was to be obtained only through revolution, a stern fact which must be accepted by those who would be true to their manhood, true to their duty as citizens of a nation, and true to their God. In Philadelphia, on the Fourth of July, 1776, the idea of separation found its full expression in that grand Declaration, which Americans hail as the great embodiment of their first recognition of the idea of an independent existence.

Still even this utterance looked only to freedom from foreign control, to a confederation of associated states against dangers from without. It was devoid of a suspicion that a higher, national and organic life was here to assert itself, different from anything else the world had ever known before, which was to develop into forms strange and novel, and through a vigorous youth, manifesting many of the errors of that stage of existence, finally to attain to a strength and maturity that would place it alongside of the older nations of the earth. The revolution followed, and the system of government by which it had been clogged and fettered was broken to pieces. Rebellion against Great Britain became a necessity to the full devel-

opment of the idea of patriotism, and it ceased to be rebellion when "it expressed the conviction of the common people and the common will," and attained the higher dignity of a revolution. Says Rothe, as quoted by Mulford ;* "Regarded abstractly, revolutions are always moral anomalies ; but actually they are to be regarded as unavoidable, and therefore only apparent moral anomalies. For in human history, through the power of sin, the development cannot continue to proceed in a continuous sequence, but only through many throes and crises. The revolution, which is really the work of the nation itself, can only be regarded as such a crisis, which through external impediments becomes the condition of the maintenance of the moral life of the nation : and such a revolution therefore can only be justified when it rests on the living conviction of the people in its totality." Such a living conviction nerved the arms of our revolutionary forefathers, enabled them to withstand a long and exhausting war against the so-called mother country, and finally, under the blessing of God, to attain their independence.

But though the Declaration of Independence was based upon the asserted existence of a necessity for "*one* people to dissolve the political bonds which had connected them with another," still the oneness of the people was practically without recognition. Difficulties began to spring out of the Confederation, which menaced the prosperity that should have proceeded from independent life. Then was assembled the famous Constitutional Convention, in which deputies from the separate States were authorized to act for the whole people, and who formulated their conception of the nation as a unit in the simple but grand preamble to the Constitution they unanimously adopted on the seventeenth day of September, 1787.

We the *People* of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." Whether the full conception of the organic unity that gave the nation a right to a separate existence was then even more than suspected by these statesmen, may, without doing injustice to their

*Mulford. *The Nation*, 152.

heads or hearts, be readily doubted. The full recognition of great truths is a slow process.

In fact two tendencies speedily appeared, antagonistic to each other—either of which would put an end to national life were it to obtain supremacy. The one, centrifugal in character, delighted in empty declamations on states-rights; the other, centripetal in nature, descanted on the necessity of a strong government. The former never appreciated the meaning of the declaration in the preamble to the constitution, never rose to a clear conception of the idea of the nation as an organism, and looked upon nationality as a convenient term to indicate confederation: the latter failed to appreciate the fact that the parts of an organic whole have separate and distinct functions, and that their vitality may be displayed in different ways, subject only to a general coördination and regulation. The former would have had constant self-assertion among the States, in order to establish the fact of their independence of each other: the latter would have destroyed the states, in order to gain an all-powerful centralization. The former naturally tended towards disintegration, the latter towards autocratic power, or what has been called “Caesarism.”

These tendencies have manifested themselves all through our history down to the present day; the strength of the national life has been shown in its intolerance of either, and the resolute determination it has manifested to suppress their predominance. When a party in power has shown a tendency to disregard the rights of States, the free spirit of the people has sternly rebuked it; when a gigantic rebellion was organized to overthrow the federal power and to establish individual state-supremacy, the people, by force of arms, put it down. Thus learning that Scylla presents dangers as perilous to the ship of state as those known to exist in Charybdis, true statesmen have labored to guard against both, and to steer along a middle course, as that freest from danger. The national life has been recognized as most prosperous when manifested in accordance with its own norm—when the functions of the federal government have been allowed their legitimate play, and those of the States such exercise as may insure their individual rights. The brain must not assume the functions of the heart or stomach, much less those peculiar to the limbs, if the animal organism is to be true to the idea underlying it. And similarly, the relative functions of the federal

and state governments must be performed normally, in that complete harmony which, history has shown, affords the most satisfactory exhibition of the true end and design of our national life.

As a special proof of the peculiarity of the life that pervades the nation, may be mentioned the rapidity with which the most dissimilar elements are made to harmonize when brought together under our flag, and to take on the form previously assumed by those who inherit American citizenship. Drawn to our shores by a variety of reasons, there are representatives of almost all the nations of the globe, disciples of all the religions cultivated by mankind. The assimilating power of the national vitality speedily shows itself in the incorporation of these into full citizenship. With some there is a sturdy struggle for the retention of their mother-tongue, for the manners and usage of the nations whose citizenship they have renounced, for the introduction of regulations and customs peculiar to other lands; but the result is always, sooner or later, a submergence of all these and the adoption of that which belongs to American life. The German, the Frenchman, the Northman, the English, the Irish, the Scotch, lay aside their peculiarities, become Americanized, and speedily manifest the national life into which they have become incorporated. We are an English-speaking people, but no true student can speak of us as in any sense showing forth the life that is peculiar to England. It is as foreign to us as that which prevails in France, Germany, or any other nation that has contributed to swell the tide of emigration which yearly pours in upon us from foreign shores. Our naturalized citizens speedily become as jealous of our honor as those "to the manner born." They rally to the defence of our flag when dangers within or without threaten its safety. They enter into the commercial and mechanical pursuits of our people, are found in the ranks of our professions and in the public offices of our country. And all this not as adventurers, but as citizens, who having sought incorporation, have become vitalized with the national life; grafted into the sturdy stalk, its life has permeated and made them parts—integral parts—of itself.

And this lesson has also diminished the fear that was once felt lest an influx of foreigners might be so great as to overpower and overthrow the form of government we have inherited. The power of remaining foreigners is really denied those who come here to

assume citizenship, by the national life they enter into. They cease speedily not only to be foreigners in name, but also in thought, habit and custom; and hence they add to the homogeneity of the nation. And such must be the case so long as the people of this nation remain faithful to the life which God has given it; so long as they honestly, earnestly and patriotically strive to keep the nation true to its real mission.

2. *The integrity of the nation being essential to the full play of all its parts, it is incumbent upon its citizens to contend for its preservation even at peril of life and limb.* What is meant by patriotism but that the citizen should entertain a love for the *patria*, akin to that which beats in the dutiful child's heart for his *pater*, his parents in the flesh? Lieber says that it designates "that sacred enthusiasm which prompts to great exertions, and has the welfare, honor, and reputation of the country at large in view," and is founded upon "that indestructible sympathy and attachment which every uncorrupted heart feels toward its own country." There is a pseudo philanthropy which demands credit for itself because it ignores any special claims of family and country, and professes to be alone interested in that which concerns men as men. It asserts a catholicity of sympathy that struggles against any metes or bounds to its active labors. But when it is closely scrutinized, and the practical results of its asserted liberality carefully examined, we shall find it is nothing but shallow pretense—a miserable fraud. As well might we expect to find true parental affection in one whose time was spent in visiting her neighbors' houses and in investigating their needs and wants, while thriftlessness and misery reigned at home—whose lachrymal glands were always surcharged with tears for foreign want, while domestic suffering failed to elicit an act of kindness or a word of sympathy; as well might we expect to see the full development of Christian activity in one whose time was passed in visiting sister churches and boasting of the catholicity of his faith, while the claims of his own church upon his time and energies were ignored—whose life was frittered away in examining and eulogizing the prosperity of the fields of labor assigned to others, while those where his own duties called him to active work were totally neglected. Fidelity to family and to church require us first to be true to the duties there imposed upon us, not only before we endeavor to extend our sympathies, but in

order that we may do so with proper success. And similarly does patriotism require us to labor for our own country, whether ours by virtue of nationality or choice, in order that we may fit ourselves for the wider and broader demands of a true philanthropy, which is as different from the bogus article as the pure metal is from the counterfeit which is only a miserable imitation.

But as filial duty to cherish and protect the parent is intensified where the life of the latter absolutely depends upon its performance, so the citizen's duty to strive for a healthy, vigorous national life is heightened when the very existence of the nation is dependent upon the possession of such vitality. Here then patriotism can at all times find a field for the due exercise of all its faculties. Its proper field is not that of pride or vain-glory, where depreciation of other lands and other governments is associated with undue exaltation of the nation. Indeed true patriotism has nothing in common with hatred of other lands, any more than, to use another's words, "a man who feels deeply attached to one woman among so many thousand thereby declares that he holds her to be better, wiser, purer than all the rest." True, the exaggerated phraseology of sentimentalism, which is at best but a poor imitation of love, admits of superlative language when the beloved is the subject, and may indulge in meaningless rant; but that love which is strongest and most enduring proceeds from *positive sympathy* for one, irrespective of all comparison of her peculiar characteristics with those of the rest of her sex. It finds its pleasure and its duty combined in its love, and is elevated by this feeling above the passion of indifference or hate towards the others. In fact, one cannot love any one object worthy of real love without, by that very fact, being made capable of appreciating whatever is lovable in the world around. True patriotism thus has no connection properly with a spirit of disparagement, but may indeed enable us "to value other countries higher in the abstract." And yet to our own nation we are bound by the sweetest tie of affection; for her our earnest efforts must be directed to keep her in that path which will make her honored among the nations of the earth, and when need arises to leave even home and kindred, and to peril life and limb for her. Because there can be no home unless it is under the aegis of national protection, there can be no security for kindred unless it be afforded by law. There can be no protecting vine and

fig-tree unless these grow up under the nurturing and fostering care of a wise, paternal government.

Nor is this idea an outgrowth of modern civilization, or a result simply of the teachings of Christianity. It is an instinct of the human heart which has been illustrated in a thousand different ways since the beginning of history. It was a heathen poet who sung

“*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori,*”

and yet the sentiment finds an emphatic response in every human breast. But when this natural instinct is associated with a justifiable pride in the proper performance of the peculiar mission entrusted to a country,—where the reason finds that the instinct is not blind in its attachment to an unworthy object, but gives it approval, then the arm is nerved and the courage intensified in the citizens who are called forth to its defense.

Have we not but recently illustrated the sentiment of the American people on this subject? When the integrity of the nation was attacked, and arms were employed to ensure its disruption—when the cry for help showed how great the need was for assistance—when the demand went forth that troops should be raised to prevent the success of rebellion—what was the effect upon the peace-loving citizens of the land? Did the farmer, the mechanic, the laborer, the inventor, the man of science, the student in his library, the physician at the bedside, the lawyer at the bar, even the clergyman in the pulpit, reply “the call is not for me; I have not been trained to arms; my tastes, pursuits and education have made me a lover of peace, and given me no fitness for war?” No! but on the contrary, from the length and breadth of the loyal States was there heard an earnest entreaty from patriotic lips that they might be allowed to contend for the preservation of the Union. And so a busy, money-making people were metamorphosed into an army, undergoing the drilling and instruction that all apprentices must undergo before they become masters of a novel pursuit. Through disaster and defeat, through the blunders of ignorance and want of experience, they toiled on, until at length came success and victory. They had shown how free men could fight for a nation’s flag.

Should occasion ever require a similar relinquishment of the arts of peace for the toils and perils of war, we have the right to expect

that an equal alacrity will be shown by the American people—that the same patriotic spirit will nerve their hearts and strengthen their arms, as they form regiments, brigades and divisions in defence of the national flag. God grant that it may never again require, however, brothers to stand in arms against brothers, or that the people of this favored land be found on the battle field, except as soldiers under one flag, and that the flag of the Union, “one and indivisible!”

3. In order that every citizen should be fitted for the official positions to which he is theoretically eligible, it is essentially necessary that the advantage of mental education should be within his reach. The rights and privileges of citizenship in the possession of an ignorant man are as likely to be used to his own detriment or that of his associates as a razor in the hands of an infant. No prudent man would grant permission to a child to play with a loaded revolver; nor think it advisable to employ one to plan a house for him, who knew nothing of architecture; or to contract for any needed work save with those who were presumptively acquainted with such work. Trained or educated labor is demanded by the practical business man, and hence he invariably has recourse to those who have acquired skill by practice either alone or under approved masters. And as there is no pursuit, affording adequate reward to its followers, which is confined to a few, there is always room for some kind of selection among the experts. The fitness of the expert is a necessary requisite—should be the all-controlling one—to be determined before the choice is made. Where each citizen is eligible to any office, it becomes important that no one should be left in ignorance. All must be acquainted with the rudiments of knowledge, as all are liable to be called forth from the walks of private life and assigned to public duties. All should be furnished with abundant facilities for acquiring an education that would give them fitness for such duties when thus imposed upon them.

An autocracy or a monarchy may be indifferent to the education of its subjects, and may interest itself solely with the mental cultivation of the members of the aristocracy or the royal family, with possibly some few others who may be necessary to the superintendence of the wheels of government. Indeed, from a selfish stand point, they might consider education of the masses as dangerous to

their own security; just as the laws of some of the slave states prohibited instruction in reading to their slaves, for fear the latter might thereby learn something of their natural rights and of the sympathy which their wrongs had excited in the world—all of which would translate them from a state of happy, stupid ignorance, to a condition of unhappy, restless, ambitious longing to better themselves and to attain to a higher and nobler manhood. The reasoning employed to defend inattention to mental cultivation is as simple as it is unsound. It runs somewhat after this order: So long as the people are supplied with what may be needed in the way of food and clothing, so long as comfortable habitations are furnished, so long as they are kept *glebæ adscriptus*, their thoughts directed only to the natural wants of the body, they will obey the orders of their rulers without question or cavil, and will lead quiet, orderly, happy (!) lives. But all this is based upon the idea that "ignorance is bliss," which being admitted, it follows as a necessary consequence that "'tis folly to be wise." Then again, there is something calculated to charm the superficial thinker in the picture of patriarchal simplicity, where the ruler occupies the parental position to the ruled, issuing his orders to his subjects with the confident assurance that they will be implicitly obeyed, taking upon himself the care of all their wants and needs, providing for them in sickness and health, and giving them no object in life higher than that of securing his approbation and good will. But such a picture is a caricature of happiness. It is simply an exhibit of that which belongs to the infantile stage of human life, and ignores the right of individual thought and individual progress and advancement. An absolute monarchy, or an absolute autocracy, or even the prevalence of slavery, is impossible where education has given a taste of the freedom and equality which is every human being's natural and indefeasible right. They are detrimental to that progress and development in knowledge which should be open and free to all. They bind to the earth him who was made in the image of his creator, they restrict to the sphere of animal life and the narrow wants of the perishable body souls destined to survive long after all that is earthly shall disappear. Hence, irrespective of the form of government of a country, the citizens as human beings are entitled to every educational advantage that may enable them to rise above the sphere of the animal

and sensual, to learn the nature and uses of the forms of creation that were placed here in subjection to them, the characteristic properties of the forces of nature, the mysteries of the laws of thought and the wonderful facilities for expressing the same possessed by language. Only when the blessings of an education are ensured to a people, will they be enabled to make that progress in the useful or ornamental arts which will place them abreast of the column of humanity in its grand march over the broad plains of history.

But what is important to each individual, separately considered, in order that he may secure the best possible progress in the arena of life, becomes of national importance when there is no let or hindrance to his securing any position of authority which the suffrages of his fellow-citizens may indicate. Ignorance here is more than a personal evil; it is a public misfortune, as well as a public disgrace. No republic could survive if its office holders were selected only from the ranks of the ignorant and debased. Its law makers, its judges and executive officers, need that preliminary education which will make them able to command the stores of written knowledge, to understand the actual resources and present condition of the country, to appreciate such measures as will insure its progressive advance among other nations and to sustain in every possible way its honor and dignity. They should be selected on account of peculiar fitness for the stations they are intended to fill, and no man should be deprived of the opportunity of securing the intellectual training which will contribute to this fitness.

In full recognition of this lesson, the education of the masses has been a subject of intense interest to our nation during the last half century. While the number of higher institutions of learning has largely increased, and it has been a keen source of pleasure to men of wealth to pour out of their abundance into the treasuries of academies, colleges, and Universities, in still greater measure has the number of our common schools increased, until all over the States that are most prominent for their energy, enterprise, intelligence and wealth, school-houses have been planted, offering elementary instruction gratuitously to the children of the poor and lowly as well as to those of their richer and more favored neighbors. From these go forth every year those who are to control the future destinies of our land, and to protect the American name

from soil or disgrace. No amount of expenditure or care to make such schools sources of sound and useful knowledge can be considered too great. It is a wise, permanent investment, that must bring the most satisfactory results. The common school has already been the fountain whence some of our most distinguished statesmen have received the intellectual training that has fitted them to take commanding positions in the nation, and the American people are not likely to neglect in the future that which has given such satisfactory results in the past.

4. To prevent mere mental development from being used to execute wickedness, and that which will bring shame and ruin upon the nation, full and free opportunity must be granted, under the protection of law, to the ministers of religion to carry out their work of evangelization and moral instruction among the people. Mere mental culture, apart from high moral tone, will not necessarily result in honorable patriotic efforts, nor will it insure honesty and integrity. The cultivated scoundrel differs from the class to which he belongs only in his capacity to execute more successfully his villainous plans. All that mere mental culture can do for him is to increase his power of doing wrong in the community, to give an exquisite edge to the blade which he wields on the right and the left in pressing forward in his career of dishonesty and crime, to intensify the poison he naturally possesses so as to make it more fatal to his victims. "Whited sepulchres may attract the eye by their beautiful external appearance, possibly may not offend the nose if at a suitable distance, and yet they may be full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness." Similarly, the culture which has been wholly intellectual may command admiration for its extent and thoroughness, may charm the ear by its eloquent diction, and captivate the soul by the sublimity of its utterances, and yet be conjoined with a heart full of moral filth and corruption,—may indeed prove a very focus of contagion to a nation. Hence no culture can be considered desirable which loses sight of the moral nature of man. The true and the beautiful can have no abiding home unless when associated with the good.

But morality is unattainable unless in connection with religion, which is its groundwork and basis. And religion necessarily implies a recognition of some power outside of and above the sphere of humanity, from whence its precepts proceed and whose approval

or disapproval must be looked for in every human act. Hence the nation cannot be indifferent to religion. Says Lieber on this point,* "If we comprehend within this term all belief, true or erroneous, in an agent or agents overruling the actions and destinies of men, possessed of a power surpassing human power, which extends to the changes in the physical world, we shall find that men have never existed without some religion, whether it be in the form of the grossest fetish religion, adoring beings which do not even represent real or imagined animate beings, or polytheism, or monotheism. The consciousness of our dependence and of the great limitations of our power, fear or hope, desire of superior aid, or a longing for support and comfort in adversity, which every man feels that he himself or his fellow man are incapable of affording, has invariably led men to acknowledge a superior agency of some sort or other. Man has always adored. If, therefore, there were no other reason why we should promote pure religion—and there are many indeed—this would be a strong one, that man will not and cannot live without some religion, of whatever character; and if he has not a true one he will embrace a false one; if he has not belief or true faith he will resort to superstition, or rather his heart will naturally engender it. But if a religion acknowledges a God "who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity," who is love and all-pure, it needs no farther discussion to show how deeply the whole society is interested in maintaining the diffusion of such a faith, which affords the two most powerful agents of morality; namely, on the one hand, mental communion with a being who is purity himself, and, being omniscient, does not judge by signs or outward actions, but searches the motives in the deepest recesses of our hearts, and who, being almighty, affords support to all who seek it in purity from him; and on the other hand, the belief in the immortality of the soul. It extends at once the whole sphere of action; its effects and tests go beyond the mere calculation of expediency, and thus the belief must needs become the most powerful primitive impulse to good actions, uprightness, disinterestedness, kindness, love of truth, and admiration of what is truly good, beautiful, noble and great."

*Lieber's Political Ethics, II., 67.

Still the cultivation of religion pure and undefiled is not the province of the nation *per se*. It belongs to the Church—another divine institution, possessed of peculiar powers through its great Head, which are manifested in the entire renovation of sinful nature and the impartation of a spiritual life to the penitent human being. But the Church is not dependent upon the State, although the latter owes its most perfect and successful development to the purity of life, which the influence of the former bestows upon its faithful members. Hence it is necessary that the Church should be protected by the State in all its legitimate efforts to extend the influence of the truths entrusted to it for the good of mankind; that it should be allowed free scope in the work of evangelization and moral instruction among the people, because the best kind of citizens are those who are sincere followers of Christ.

The protection furnished by the State must not be in the form of subsidy or pecuniary support, which would place the Church in a dependent position, but rather by prohibiting every thing that would interfere with the due exercise of its functions. Thus it is right that there should be Sunday laws, so that those who wish to keep the day in accordance with their interpretation of the divine command may not be subjected to interruption by the noise of business or pleasure. It is right that severe penalties should be imposed for disturbance of divine worship, that the clergy should be exempted from certain civil duties which might interfere seriously with the due performance of their professional functions, that the church in some form be recognized as the guardian of morality. This can be done without discriminating between the different denominations that claim to be alike sharers of her high prerogatives and privileges.

Where the question arises in regard to religions that are not Christians, and the followers of some of these are to be found in our country—"How far can the government render them protection?" the answer must be: only so far as their services are not disturbances of public order, and their teachings not subversive of morality and good citizenship. The Christian Church, if true to the teachings of her Master, cannot ask that law be used to suppress other forms of religion, but must rejoice at the opportunity of bearing the truth to the followers of such, in full confidence that

the seed thus planted will yield a rich reward for their labor. The fanatics and hyper-pietists, who wished to drive the Chinese from our shores for fear that they would paganize an essentially Christian land, only showed by their conduct how weak was their faith in the power and vitality of the Christian religion. Far different was the spirit of those who hailed the influx of the Chinese as affording them an opportunity for earnest evangelical labor under the protecting ægis of a government that has learned not to despise the religion upon which its founders relied for strength, and whose teachings can only result in creating the highest type of citizenship.

These are some of the lessons learned by the American people during the first century of national existence. They do not contain any novelties, but are simple rehabilitations of truths that have always existed. Truth is never new save to him who meets with it for the first time, when it has the charm of novelty. It may be hidden from observation for years or centuries, but such concealment does not tend to its decay. Ever fresh and living to him who finds it, he will never go astray who follows its guidance; but great will be the condemnation of him to whom the light of truth is revealed in vain. To sin against light and to plunge into deliberate blindness will bring its own terrible punishment. In proportion as we profit by the lessons taught us in the past shall we advance to the forefront of the nations of the earth, not only in strength and wealth, but also in those higher characteristics which give durability to a national name and fame. We must never lose sight of these lessons, for if a nation becomes oblivious of its divine mission, of the imperative demands of patriotism on its citizens, of the need of intellectual culture to raise it above the plane of the animal, and of the importance of that moral and religious training which recognizes this life as but a preparation for another of eternal duration, then its downfall and utter ruin will be a mere matter of time. It will speedily become a prey to the spoiler from without, or to inevitable destruction from dissensions and divisions at home. Continual vigilance is essential to the durability of any nation, and abiding attachment to truth is sure passport to a green old age.

It is proper, however, before dismissing the subject, to glance

briefly, for time will admit only of a brief retrospect, at some peculiar results or successes attained by the nation during its first hundred years, not for the purpose of vain glory, but to show that imperfectly as we have learned the lessons already mentioned, still they have borne rich and abundant fruit. Progress of an unexampled character has marked our history. While we would avoid the excessive laudations of American optimists, it cannot be wrong to shun the dispiriting jeremiads of the disciples of the pessimist school, and to glance at the actual results of our history.

1. *Population*.—At the breaking out of the revolutionary war it is estimated that there were 2,083,000 (including 500,000 slaves,) men, women and children living in the thirteen colonies. How many of these were natives and how many of foreign birth it is impossible to state, nor is there any certainty as to the correctness of the number, since it is the result of conjecture and not of an actual census-enumeration. When the first census, however, was taken in 1790 the number is given as 3,929,214, which presents a strong contrast to the grand total 38,558,371 as furnished by the census of 1870. Assuming that the increase from 1870 to the present has been at the same rate as between 1860 and 1870, we may reckon the present population of the United States as nearly 42,000,000, in other words nearly twenty-one times more than when the oppressive measures of the English government drove the people into rebellion. Then thirteen colonies along the Atlantic coast constituted the nucleus. They were thinly settled and poorly provided with means of inter-state intercourse. Now there are thirty-eight States stretching across the broad continent, one of which is almost an empire itself on the shores of the Pacific, with a population drawn from all quarters of the globe, developing signs of the national spirit and enterprise wherever a settlement is made, and building up populous towns and cities in an almost incredibly short space of time. That which was formerly our extreme west has become the east to the Chinese, Japanese and other oriental nations.

The singular rapidity with which the foreign element becomes Americanized is as startling as the numbers in which it appears. For a while some of them may contend for their national rites and customs, may pride themselves upon their foreign origin, but they

sooner or later succumb to the prevailing spirit and esteem it a high privilege to be American citizens. Their children claim to be Americans by birth and care not to push their genealogies beyond the country which they find so congenial to prosperity and enterprise. Even the peculiar physical characteristics belonging to the countries whence the fathers came, are gradually disappearing and giving place to a type peculiar alone to the United States, so that with a singular conglomeration of surnames indicating cosmopolitan origin, our population generally presents uniform physical and mental peculiarities.

2. *Valuation of Property.*—Here the data are very inadequate to a comparative statement of what has been done in the century, but we can compare the valuation of the property of the country, exclusive of that belonging to the general government, as presented by the census of 1870, with that of 1850. The latter was stated to be \$7,135,780,228, and the former \$30,068,518,507; in other words, the wealth of the country, in the twenty years intervening between the two census, was increased more than four-fold. This includes landed estate, public works, manufactures, and personal estate of every kind whatever. True, there is a dark side to this statement, which shows a huge national debt and great indebtedness on the part of most of the States, but the elasticity of the country bears loads of this kind with great equanimity, buoyed up with the confident assurance that its present and future resources will ensure certain liquidation.

Along with this increase of wealth, which is probably more generally distributed than in any other country on the globe, there is to be found a large increase of the comforts and luxuries of civilization, some of which penetrate the humblest cottages of the land. Foreign countries are made to contribute to the daily needs of the American citizen, and the oceans are whitened with sails bearing such contributions to our busy ports and then carrying off with them our own productions in exchange. Indeed, what would have been a rare luxury to the wealthy one century ago is now simply a necessity to the humble citizen. Its price brings it within the reach of his income, and his tastes lead him to require that which his income will secure. And this is not only true in regard to material wants, food, clothing and shelter, but also to those

aesthetic wants which cultivated tastes create. Works of art are in demand, sculpture and painting are liberally encouraged, architecture is invited to unite the beautiful with the useful in public and private edifices, music finds votaries quite as enthusiastic as in the old world, and for all these branches of the fine arts money is expended with a very lavish hand. True, the taste which induces the expenditure is not always such as will stand fair criticism; our galleries of paintings contain but little of the rare results of exalted talent as compared with the acres of canvass covered with mere daubs; our statuary, notwithstanding some brilliant examples of native and foreign genius, contains hosts of figures like those exhibited in the horrible collection in the Capital for which the national treasury has been heavily mulcted; our music is not always of the classic schools of Beethoven, Mozart or Handel, or even that conjured up by the weird genius of Richard Wagner, and our architecture only at rare intervals gives us a Girard College, while it mostly delights in the perpetration of costly enormities, embodying nothing but the idea of senseless expenditure. Still it is a gratifying circumstance that wealth has aspirations after that which is beautiful, and it bids us hope that in time, as cultivation advances, we shall rise from our present contentment with that which is mere pretense, to a higher, purer and more perfect art.

3. *Intellectual Progress.*—This may be shown in various ways, and notably by the number of institutions, public and private, devoted to educational purposes, from those where rudimentary instruction is given to those devoted to technical, professional and higher culture generally. The number of such institutions in 1870 was 141,629, with 221,042 teachers, and 7,209,938 pupils, at an expense of 95,402,726 dollars. These figures most eloquently set forth the appreciation of education in the land. They show how wide-spread must be the feeling that, without its aid, the people would be unfitted to solve the great problem of the national destiny. And this is still more satisfactorily shown by the great demand for intellectual pabulum, whether of a high or low degree. There were in the year mentioned 3,871 newspapers published in the United States, with a total of 1,508,548,250 copies annually issued, and an aggregate of 164,815 libraries, public and private, containing 45,528,938 volumes. The newspaper or the printed

volume is the source to which nearly every adult resorts for information, and these statistics show how large a number of readers there must be to justify such an enormous supply.

The intellectual progress of the nation is also shown, and in a way that gives her a high position, by the number of her authors who are acknowledged as of pre-eminent worth by the literary world. Prior to 1775 we find John Eliot published his Indian version of the Bible—now a rare curiosity to the biblomaniac—Cotton Mather his *Magnalia Christi Americani*, Jonathan Edwards his treatise on “The Freedom of the Will,” Franklin his essays and scientific papers, which with a few books of scientific travels and historical contributions, are still referred to as of classic value. From 1775 to 1820 the political writings of Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Hamilton, John Adams, Ames and Patrick Henry; the scientific productions of Rittenhouse, Rush, Barton, Wilson and others; the poetical effusions of Barlow, Trumbull and Hopkinson; the works of fiction of Brown, Brackenbridge,—represent strength of thought, careful research, and imaginative powers, although Sydney Smith at the close of this period asked the question “Who reads an American book?” as though there was no literature here worthy of notice. Then commenced a period in our literary history full of remarkable contributions in all the departments of intellectual labor, which have won a proud place in the libraries of the world. Bancroft, Schoolcraft, Prescott and Motley have taken their place among the historians; Irving, Cooper, Paulding, Poe and Hawthorne among the writers of fiction; Bryant, Longfellow, Halleck, Whittier, Lowell and Holmes among the poets; Audubon, Agassiz, Dana, Hare, Henry and Silliman among the scientists, and a host of others whose names would require hours to enumerate, have made contributions in every department of literature and science, which fully demonstrate the great talent of their authors and the high character of the literature of the nation. In the last half century America has left no niche in the temple of knowledge unstudied by her sons, and has made valuable contributions to them all.

4. *Scientific Progress.*—In science the nation has been no laggard. Since the time when Franklin *fulmen e cœlo, sceptrumque tyrannis eripuit*, it has always had citizens who have diligently

delved in this field. Franklin's researches into the mysteries of electricity but paved the way for those of Henry and Morse, whose discoveries culminated in the invention of the telegraph, and then the daring of an American pressed its application until the submarine cable was devised and successfully laid. And what an impulse to commerce, manufactures, and all the peaceful arts has not the telegraph given! There is something almost awe-inspiring in the thought that the slender wires that hang mid-air over land through populous countries, over desert plains and barren mountains, as well as in the depths of old ocean, are the highways along which are constantly passing messages of business and love, announcements of birth or death, of triumph or defeat, of peace or war. It is a thousand times more wonderful than the stories of the Arabian Nights or the lying pretensions of mediaeval magicians.

Again, take the art of Heliography or sun-painting; although the first germ was not the discovery of an American, yet the honor of first taking the picture of a living man belongs to Draper of New York—a naturalized citizen. What has it not done towards the perpetuation of the loved and the beautiful! Have not discoveries rapidly followed each other in this art until its cultivators, with a bold venture, have even succeeded in catching the changing phases of a solar eclipse or a transit of Venus, and given them an enduring permanence never dreamed of in the wildest dreams of the craziest visionary? We have ceased to marvel at its triumphs, and only regret that mankind had not been blessed with its power centuries ago, so that we might now look upon the wonderful presentments of the countenances of those men of olden time, whose characters we have learned to love, reverence or adore.

And in the department of natural history our activity has been no less marked. Under the vigorous industry, earnest enthusiasm and wonderful genius of the naturalized Swiss Professor Agassiz—*clarum et venerabile nomen*—who relinquished European honors of the most attractive kind to labor and toil among the savans of our own land, not only has the Cambridge Museum, to which his energies were principally directed, risen to a magnitude and importance which makes it attractive to naturalists all over the world, but numerous others have sprung into existence, each bearing

some important contribution to the knowledge of mankind. We have learned, money-making people as we are, to recognize science as worthy of our best brains and our severest labor.

To the question "Who reads an American book?" now will the reply come from every student's laboratory all over the world, "Without a knowledge of what the savans of the new world have done, one is but poorly acquainted with any field of investigation and study." They have gained a reputation among mankind which shames the silly nobility whose only claim to recognition is based upon what its ignorant forefathers with rude muscular force inflicted on their weaker brethren, and whose childish pride is content with a display of coats of arms emblazoned with tawdry decorations. They are enumerated among the benefactors of the race, whose glory consists in enlarging the field of investigation and increasing the knowledge of mankind.

5. *Progress in Mechanic Arts.*—The practical bent of the American mind finds every employment in the invention of improved forms of machinery, and the immense collection of models which fill the cases of the national Patent-Office furnishes abundant proof of great success. By improved machinery new occupations have been introduced and old ones have been caused to disappear. It would be impossible to mention even the most important of these, without taxing the patience of my audience beyond ordinary endurance. A glance at a few may serve to show how much American skill has done for the world in this department.

Formerly our grain was cut either with the sickle or cradle, and to gather in a moderate harvest, without large assistance from those engaged in the mechanical arts of our towns and villages, would have been almost impossible. Other occupations were thrown aside, and the harvest field was made to resound with the noise of busy crowds of men toiling and sweating over the heavy grain. Now by the aid of mechanical contrivances the work is done with comparatively little human assistance, and there is no hindrance to the business of the mechanic; while the farmer more speedily and surely gathers in the rich crops which nature returns for the labor he has expended upon the soil. The mower and reaper, moreover, enables larger crops to be cultivated and more food to be raised for home-population or exportation. It has

diminished the necessity for human labor in one department, increased the material wealth of the country, and made it able to feed a larger number of citizens.

Again, the contrivances used for spinning, weaving and finishing cotton goods are mainly of American invention, resulting in increasing the quantity of the manufactured article yearly brought into market, diminishing its cost per yard, and giving employment to thousands of men, women and children who would otherwise be obliged to eke out a miserable existence, full of struggles with misery and starvation.

The printing press has been also made to receive the impress of American ingenuity. Instead of the slow movement of the old hand press, steam has been brought into requisition, and immense editions of our huge city daily newspapers are prepared in a few hours to meet the demand of a public greedy for the latest news—a demand which could not have been supplied at all by the hand-press of the older time.

The sewing machine, now an indispensable piece of furniture in every household, has lightened labor greatly, and diminished the drudgery to which the slave of the needle was doomed before its introduction. And not only has it made the plain sewing of the family an easy task, but it has opened a way for decorative work which develops the artistic taste and aesthetic faculties to an extent altogether impossible in former times. And it, with all its manifold improvements, is purely and absolutely the result of American skill and American labor.

With one more illustration I shall close. Not many years ago the American would have readily admitted that he could never compete with the foreign mechanic in the construction of accurate time-pieces, because it was believed that they must be made by hand to be of suitable delicacy, and the cost of labor in foreign countries was very much below that which was claimed to be its due in this country. Still, even here, American talent, combined with patience and perseverance, has gained a great triumph. It has devised machinery which finishes with the greatest possible accuracy all the intricate parts of the most delicate time-pieces, and its watches are now recognized as the best made in the world.

Such are some of the striking results attained by the United

States during the first hundred years of its existence,—attained while learning the lessons which its history so earnestly and impressively set before its citizens. It is proposed to signalize its Jubilee by making a public exhibition of the productions of its soil, the results of its ingenuity and mechanic talent, and of everything that will tend to show what nature has furnished and human skill has produced. In such an exhibition, North and South can honestly strike hands, not over a silly rhetorician's "bloody chasm" but with fraternal grasp and loyal zeal for the success of the nation in the future, as they gaze upon the wondrous results of her past success. And where should such an exhibition be held but on the spot where the first blast of liberty was blown, the reverberations of which have been echoing and re-echoing over hill and dale for these hundred years? And as young and old wend their way to the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia, to meet not only this grand display from our own country, but magnificent contributions from other nations and peoples that have been invited to bring all they may have of taste and skill, let their minds ponder the lessons learned in the past century, and dedicate themselves anew to the duty of preserving the liberties, which are offered to all by our Constitution, from peril, whether it come from foes within or foes without. Amid the rejoicing over the triumphs of American art and industry, let the memory recur to the old Independence bell, that first proclaimed "liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof," and then to the wonderful realization of its prophetic sound, through the blessing of a merciful Providence; until, full of a sense of profound obligation for the past and of absolute dependence in the future, the lips shall burst forth in the words of the Psalmist—

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me bless His holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

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